

REQUEST FOR REVISION OF THE 1964 CODE TO PERMIT VALID
EMENDATION OF CERTAIN *-ii* ENDINGS OF PATRONYMS.
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One of the most exasperating concerns of taxonomists is the care required to assure complete conformance of their own citations of species-group names with the original spelling of those names, as the 1964 Code requires. Many names require little attention to achieve the desired conformance; the exasperation comes mostly with names ending in *-i* or *-ii*, since there is no mnemonically effective device enabling quick recollection of the original form. Thus a strictly petty requirement of conformance with original spelling results in expenditure of effort completely out of proportion to the importance of the end result. It is not entirely a matter of opinion that the end result is of little relative importance; Article 58(10) of the Code explicitly states that species-group names differing only in "the termination *-i* or *-ii* in a patronymic genitive (e.g. *smithi*, *smithii*)" are to be considered homonyms. In effect, then, the difference is inconsequential, for there is no rule explicitly stating that the spelling of a senior homonym takes precedence over that of a junior homonym: homonyms are operational equivalents if they are decreed as homonyms, whether they actually differ in spelling or not.

On other grounds, however, it is unmistakably implicit that senior homonyms take precedence over junior operational homonyms of different spelling, by virtue of Article 32 requiring that "The original spelling of a name is to be retained as the 'correct original spelling', unless . . ." The three exceptions listed do not enter into present considerations. It could scarcely be requested that all the operational homonyms listed in Article 58 be included among the exceptions to Article 32, as it would then be necessary to specify a procedure for each one to determine the single valid spelling, or to permit free choice among taxonomists of the variant they prefer to use. One alternative entails inacceptably excessive detail of regulation; the other threatens one of the fundamental objectives of the Code, "to ensure that each name is unique and distinct" (Preamble).

In reality the only one of the 12 sets of operational homonyms listed by Article 58 for species-group names that is bothersome to taxonomists is the one that involves the terminal *-i* versus *-ii*; the others are mnemonically simple to deal with.

The grammatical acceptability of the two termination spellings (double or single *-i*) is not equal. The *-ius* ending required in Latin for all family names in the nominative singular was not accompanied, in classical Latin, by the expected double *-ii* termination in the genitive singular, but by a contraction to the single *-i* form, with rare exceptions. In postclassical Latin the double *-ii* termination, uncontracted, was frequently used. Therefore on no grounds could the single *-i* termination be considered grammatically unacceptable, whereas the double *-ii* termination could be rejected if conformance with rules of classical Latin were required.

The problem of the terminal *-i* versus *-ii* was very effectively dealt with by Articles 31 and 31 (a) of the 1961 Code, but the 1964 edition deleted Article 31(a) completely and reduced Article 31 to the status of a recommendation. In respect for the due consideration given to the complexity of these Articles (which dealt with a variety of patronym endings), we cannot ask that restitution of the Articles be reconsidered. Instead we ask for consideration solely of the terminal *-i* versus *-ii* problem.

The problem could be solved either by permitting free usage of either the *-i* or the *-ii* ending, the two variants being considered nomenclatural equals; or by requiring usage of the single *-i* ending even where the *-ii* ending was originally proposed (except in the cases described in Appendix D III 16-17).^{*} Our preference is for the less restrictive, first alternative. Only minor alterations in the Code would be required to effect it, suggested as follows through the courtesy of Mr. Melville:

a new paragraph 32(a)(iv): "In the case of a species-group name, it ends in the nomenclaturally equal *-i* or *-ii* (Art. 33c)."

a new paragraph 33c: "*Species-group names ending in -i or -ii.* A species-group name originally published with the termination *-i* or *-ii* may be subsequently spelt with either termination, deliberately or inadvertently, without constituting either an emendation or an incorrect subsequent spelling (but see Art. 58(10) and Appendix D III 16, 17)."

The intent of these inserts is (1) to eliminate the need for attention to the original spelling (in reference to the terminal patronymic *-i* or *-ii*) except as required by the name itself (e.g., Bonarelli, *bonarellii*) or by Latin, latinized or Greek names (see Appendix D III 17); and (2) to deny separate nomenclatural status to usages of the *-i* or *-ii* termination. The latter provision renders it unnecessary for the conscientious bibliographer to distinguish, as in synonymies, between usages of spellings with one terminal *-i* as opposed to two.

These objectives are clearly reflective of increasingly popular opinion among taxonomists, many of whom have become so exasperated with the tedium of inconsequential consistency with original form (in respect to the single or double terminal *-i*) that they have arbitrarily adopted the simple course of always using a single terminal *-i*, despite the violation of rules thus incurred. K. P. Schmidt (e.g., 1953, A check list of North American amphibians and reptiles, p. 5) and L. C. Stuart (e.g., 1963, A checklist of the herpetofauna of Guatemala, Misc. Publ. Mus. Zool. Univ. Michigan, 122 : 8) are especially notable among dissenters. In addition, Dr. William S. Creighton kindly advised that myrmecologists publishing in the 1900's generally adopted the single terminal *-i* irrespective of original spelling with a single or double terminal *-i*, and that he emphatically endorses the present appeal. Dr. Robert E. Gregg, also a prolific myrmecologist, supports this petition. Conversation with numerous other experienced taxonomists dealing with both vertebrate and invertebrate nomen-

^{*} "In forming a species-group name from the name of a modern man that is neither Latin, nor Latinized, nor of Greek origin, the genitive singular case-ending *-i*, in preference to the termination *-ii*, should be added to the entire name, e.g., *smithi* rather than *smithii* (from Smith), *krupai* (from Krupa), *bonarellii* (from Bonarelli))."

clature reveals an almost unanimous desire to eliminate the necessity of preservation of original *-i* or *-ii* spellings.

Yet a deliberate violation of any rule of the Code inevitably undermines confidence in it; and confidence in the Code is absolutely imperative if stability of nomenclature is to be preserved. Accordingly we here seek official sanction for a policy which seems to have widespread if not universal approval among practicing taxonomists, in order to avoid a situation that fosters even such a minor disregard of regulation as this.

Presumably other devices than the one here proposed for effecting the desired change could be devised, and we urge that they be considered. The simplest and least controversial route to the desired ends is most likely to gain approval. We submit the above proposal as a point of departure.